



The E-Gobrecht

The Electronic Newsletter of the LIBERTY SEATED COLLECTORS CLUB

Liberty Seated
Collectors Club

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John McCloskey and Len Augsburger on the Internet Radio !

Two of our Liberty Seated Collectors Club officers were interviewed at the 2008 ANA and their interviews are on the internet. Dave Harper, Editor of Numismatic News, a weekly numismatic newspaper and host of the Coin Chat radio, conducted on-the-spot interviews with John McCloskey and Len Augsburger at the 2008 ANA World's Fair of Money Convention last month in Baltimore.

John was interviewed immediately after the club's annual meeting where, in a special ceremony, he was one of the first two inductees into the LSCC Hall of Fame (Kam Ahwash was the other inductee; his daughter Michele accepted the plaque for him). The interview can be found on the internet at <http://www.coinchatradio.com/downloads.htm> then download the August 14th issue #23. John's interview starts at about 41:14 running time.

John discussed this award and his extensive numis-

matic background and accomplishments which merited this award. It is well worth hearing. Check it out!

Dave Harper interviewed Len Augsburger on the bourse floor of the ANA. Len had a bourse table and display for his new book, *Treasure in the Cellar, A Tale of Depression -Era Baltimore*, the story of two boys who unearthed a fortune in gold coins in a Baltimore basement in 1934. In his interview, Len summarizes the story and discusses how he became interested in this story.

This interview can be found on the internet at <http://www.coinchatradio.com/downloads.htm> then download the August 21st issue #24. Len's interview starts at about 24:30 running time. This interview is interesting.

Both downloads are very large files of about 50 MB; even with cable internet access, this download will take some time so sit back, relax, and prepare to enjoy.

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Congratula-
tions
John and
Len!

The E-Gobrecht is a twice award winning electronic publication of the Liberty Seated Collectors Club (LSCC). The LSCC is a non-profit organization dedicated to the attributions of the Liberty Seated Coin series. The LSCC provides the information contained in this email newsletter from various sources free of charge as a general service to the membership and others with this numismatic interest. You do not have to be a LSCC member to benefit from this newsletter; subscription to the E-Gobrecht is available to anyone. All disclaimers are in effect as the completeness and/or accuracy of the information contained herein cannot be completely verified. Contact information is included at the end.



The Heritage ANA sale featured two catalogues.

In the Platinum Night, an 1853-O no arrows half dime in MS63, and a beauty with bluish green toning, sold for \$29,900 in spite of the typical weakness at the date and wreath.

A spectacular 1844 dime in MS65 that was well struck with lovely blue toning went for \$51,750. An 1872-CC dime in AU55 that was original with a few marks and light porosity sold for \$37,375. An 1873-CC dime in XF40 that was sharp for the grade and a nice coin for some reason did not sell. Another 1873-CC dime in AU50 was once part of my collection. Someone could not stand the strict originality of the coin and brightened it. Despite the crime committed, the coin sold for \$46,000.

An 1873-CC quarter in F12 and decent for the grade did not sell, nor did a duplicate in VF25 with very nice toning and a few field marks.

An 1870-CC half dollar that was well struck and looked original in XF45 did not sell. An 1874-CC half in MS65 with light toning and strong luster sold for \$74,750 in spite of a spot at Liberty's left shoulder.

A well struck 1878-CC trade dollar that was well toned except for a bright area on the obverse did not sell.

The Baltimore Sale Catalogue featured an 1844-O half dime in XF45 and cleaned for \$575. A cleaned 1846 half dime in XF45 sold for \$2,070 and a very well

Auction News by Jim Gray

struck AU55 of the same date that had a slightly glossy look from an old dipping but had retoned in an album soared to \$7,705. A cleaned 1853-O no arrows half dime in XF45 realized \$862.

An original 1844 dime in VF20 went for \$862 and an 1871-CC dime in F15 that was original and nice for the grade went for \$8,625. An 1873-CC in AG3 with a clear date and mint mark went for \$2,185 and a VF20 duplicate and perfect for a F/VF set rose to \$9,200. Another 1873-CC dime in XF but with environmental damage and absolutely ugly sold for \$3,737.

A well struck and bright 1852-O half dollar, ex-Eliasberg, in MS64 and one of the three finest known rose to \$18,400. An 1855-S half in VF25 with the 'E' gone went for \$1,955 and another in AU55 with dark toning and a few spots went for \$9,775. An attractive 1866-S no motto half in XF45 and a nice example of this elusive date went for \$2,990. A bright 1871-CC half in XF40 sold for \$2,990 and an 1873-CC arrows in XF45 and a nice original piece went for \$2,760. An 1874-CC in XF40 and perhaps dipped long ago but retoning sold for \$5,750.

An 1871-CC dollar in F15 and original with 'BER' gone sold for \$8,050.

The Stacks Decator Sale only featured one coin of interest, an 1845-O dime in AU55. This coin was very well struck for the date but dipped and had a number of marks on the obverse and did not sell.



Question of the Month

Topics for e-Discussion by Paul Kluth

Should this Coin be Lightly Cleaned or Dipped?



Shown above is an 1847 Liberty Seated Quarter (in the VF condition range) with rather dark, unattractive toning. This particular coin also has the ever-popular and scarce Double Die Reverse. Doubling is very prominent at QUAL DOL and UNITED. This variety does not appear to have the repunched 1847/47 date on the obverse or at least you can't see it with the dark toning.

Attribution for this variety is Briggs 1-A, Breen 3970, and Cherrypicker's FS-25-1847-801 (but without the repunched date). In the recent LSCC consensus for Seated Quarters, only 7 specimens of this particular variety were reported and only 4 reverse double dies were reported with the 1847/47 date obverse.

So, what should one do? Should this coin be dipped, lightly cleaned, or professionally conserved to improve eye appeal and possible market value? Or should this coin be left alone as it is?

Give us your thoughts and let's take a vote! All responses are welcome! Please reply with your opinion to the *E-Gobrecht* Editor at wb8cpy@arrl.net.



Hits on The *E-Gobrecht* on Gerry Fortin's website

Last month out of curiosity, I (the Editor) queried Gerry Fortin if he had a method of determining the number of hits the issues of *The E-Gobrecht* were getting on his website. He provided lots of information and the narrative below.

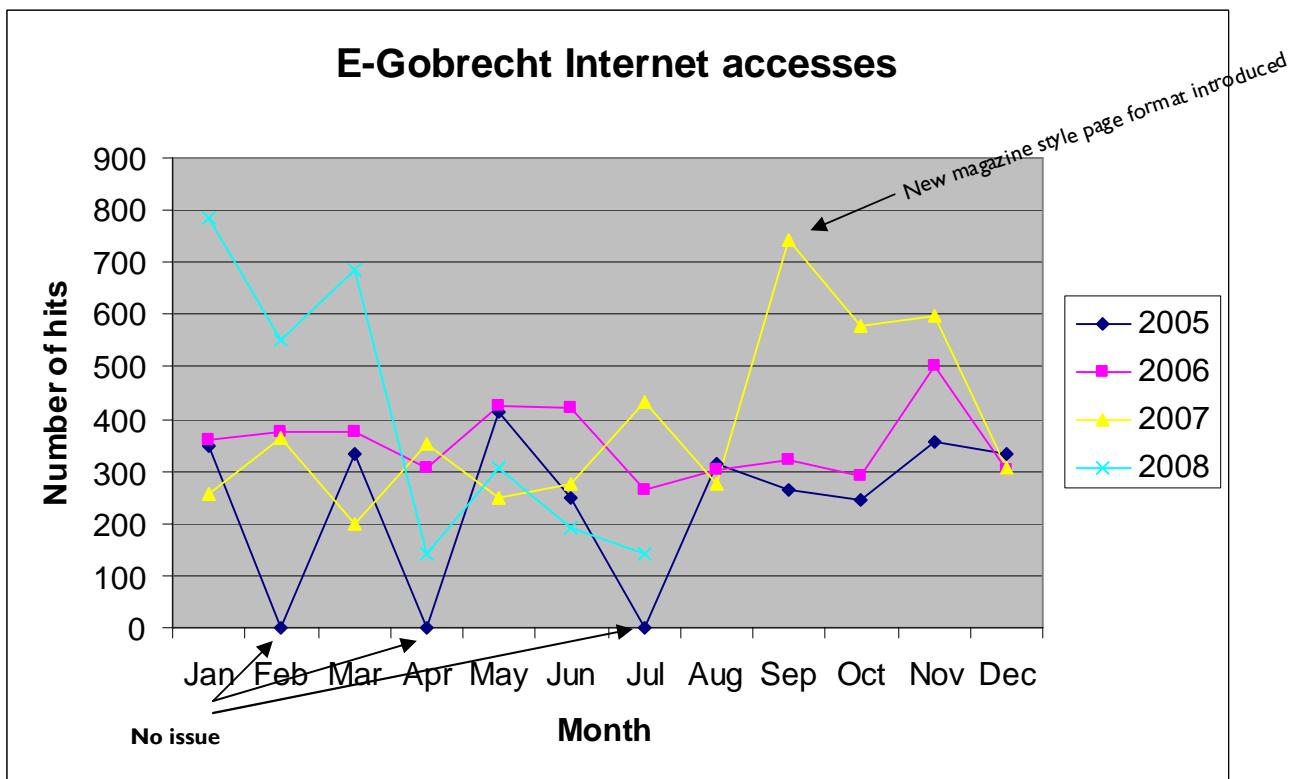
"Attached is a table (*I converted it into a line graph, Editor*) which shows the *E-Gobrecht* page hits (at www.seateddimevariety.com/LSCC) for the January 2005 through July 2008 timeframe. My website hosting company provides a weekly update on a variety of website statistics which allows me to tune content for improved readership. This feature is checked weekly and the popularity of the *E-Gobrecht* back issues is obvious from the statistics.

The *E-Gobrecht* archive links were active with readers during the last 12 months. Most notable is the substantial increase in hits for the September 2007 issue when you converted the *E-Gobrecht* to the newspaper format. The September issue has seen 742 hits in the past 12 months. The earlier conversion of the *E-Gobrecht* to PDF format in April 2007 did not have an obvious impact. Though the readers did not (seem to be) excited about the file type format change, I was elated as PDF files are so much easy to handle than Word files with internal images.

Issue to issue, member content is an important factor driving page hits and I will leave the analysis of content types vs. page hits as an exercise for your free time.

I was surprised to see that the *E-Gobrecht* archives do not contain links for the October, November and December 2007 back issues. (*Editor, there were no issues then...*)"

With about 400 *E-Gobrecht* subscribers, I'm delighted to see many more people access the archived copies! *Editor*





Seated Dime Web-Book Updates and Other Ramblings

by Gerry Fortin

"How time flies" is the best approach to describe my surprise that a year has passed since last submitting a web-book update to the *E-Gobrecht*. Recent correspondence with Bill Bugert on how to determine the number of "hits" to the *E-Gobrecht* back issue archives at the Liberty Seated Collector Club link (<http://www.seateddimevarieties.com/LSCC.htm>) allowed for a quick check on the last web-book update. The answer was a surprising September 2007. To catch everyone up on the website changes, here is a quick summary;

Probably the most important website site improvement is the Seated Dime Date Pictorial link and access to all known varieties for each date and mintmark in the Seated dime series. Where did the idea for this feature come from? On the website's message board, I would occasionally post a complete list of varieties within favorite dates and support the listing with obverse and reverse images from the membership based web-book content. Fellow collectors expressed interest in the posts, permitting them to view a full image catalogue of varieties "within a date". Since there was positive response to the concept, it was decided to build a pictorial module including all Seated dime dates and mintmarks and have open public access. Once the module development started, I received a suggestion to add the Denticle Ruler table as a header to each date's pictorial page. The suggestion was deemed to be a good idea which allowed casual readers to enjoy a moderately usable variety attribution tool. The entire pictorial module is also self rewarding as the entire

Fortin variety reference set can be easily accessed at one website link. Maintenance of the pictorial image database is straightforward as internal web-book image improvements are automatically linked to the Pictorial module.

If *E-Gobrecht* readers have not already visited the Seated Dime Date Pictorials, you can access via this link; http://www.seateddimevarieties.com/pictorial/reg_index.htm.

I have to be honest that the open registry module received minimal attention in the last six months. Though there was a desire to complete the Seated Liberty quarter section, no work occurred with the only attention paid to processing Seated Dime registry updates. Starting in August, I found myself with more time on hand and first gave serious attention to growing the Seated dime registry content. The second project is to define the basic and with varieties business strike sets for Seated Liberty quarters. If all goes to plan, I hope to have those sets ready by end of September. Several LSCC members were approached to provide individual date and mintmark rarity ratings consistent with Seated dime and Seated half-dollar approaches.

Speaking of growing the number of Seated dime sets in the open registry, I approached a certain individual who has assembled the finest set of Seated dimes in my humble opinion. That set is listed at one of the TPG registries and would also be the highlight of the Seated dime

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open registry. The individual was positive about the idea and I am happy to report that the “EHG” collection is presently available for viewing at the various Seated dime set links. One has to marvel at the depth of the coins in the Carson City and New Orleans subsets with set ratings and weighed grades at the mint state level. The “EHG Carson City Collection”

(http://www.seateddimevarieties.com/registry/cc_index.htm) obtained a set rating of 62.2 while the “EHG New Orleans Collection”

(http://www.seateddimevarieties.com/registry/o_index.htm) delivered a weighed grade of 65.2! When a set is 100% complete, the set rating and weighed grades are equivalent. As impressive are the entire “EHG Varieties Collection” and the San Francisco subset. Congratulations to EHG for setting the generational benchmark for Liberty Seated Dime set building.

Other Ramblings

I do wish to provide a few heart felt comments about the Baltimore ANA show since not attending a major show since November 2006. Seeing old friends at the LSCC meeting and on the bourse floor was best described as “medicine for the soul” for a person not having face to face connections with fellow seated coinage enthusiast. I was able to finally meet Jason Feldman in person and we collectively viewed a number of seated dimes through the show. Jason also provided me several unlisted varieties for further review and inclusion in the web-book. The post LSCC meeting dinner at the M&S Grill on the harbor waterfront can be characterized as a blast with great company and food. We agreed to make the

dinner a ritual during future shows where an LSCC member meeting is held.

There were some memorable moments on the bourse floor. No major show would be complete without a visit with Liz, Gail and Mike at JJ Teaparty. Liz was excited to see me as she had two “unlisted” Seated dime varieties for my confirmation. One can trust Liz’s eyes and memory to set aside Seated dimes that look atypical. Indeed the two dimes were unlisted in the web-book, much to Liz’s enjoyment. I kept hearing from other seated collectors of Liz’s excitement over finding two unlisted varieties. For those interested, the two dimes were an 1857-O with a large bold mark minted reverse that is unknown and an 1876-CC bold struck dime with pimpled die rust through obverse and reverse. The Type I reverse mintmark position is new to me. Both coins were purchased and are to be added to the web-book in the October timeframe. I should also mention that a visit to Dick Osburn’s table did produce an unlisted 1877-CC Type I reverse dime graded PCGS MS64 with strictly original toning.

Finally, since the ANA was located in Baltimore, this was an opportunity to invite my son, Matt, who lives and works in Annapolis, to the convention and to the LSCC meeting to see his father received the Kamal Award ward. He was most impressed with the friendship and camaraderie exhibited among LSCC members. In future years, I do hope that Matt will become interested in the curator role for the Seated Dime web-book..

As always, Happy Hunting....



Jason Feldman shares another interesting seated dime variety



I wanted to comment on what an enjoyable experience this years ANA was. It was great to have dinner with so many members and exchange coin stories and expertise. For many of us, there are so few people who are knowledgeable enough to show coins to and get meaningful opinions. A few of us had a late night round table which was most enjoyable. Sometimes the best advice is the hardest to give. After that event, I found it hard to find even a single dime to buy! I am hoping to do it again soon.

For this month I have added a 1875 Dime with some neat rim cuds. I just purchased a SLR camera and am getting some great images.

Nominations for 2009 Hall of Fame

After this year's memorable ceremony where John McCloskey and Kam Ahwash were the first to be inducted into the LSCC's Hall of Fame, the Hall of Fame committee is pleased to announce that it is accepting nominations for the Liberty Seated Collector Club's 2009 Hall of Fame. Eligible nominees include club members who have made significant contributions to expanding the literature on Seated coinage, who have built an important collection of Liberty Seated coinage, or who have served in a leadership position while contributing to the success of LSCC. Please send your nominations to the Hall of Fame Committee Chairman, Jim Gray, at jgray67@carolina.rr.com and include the nominee's name and a short narrative on why you feel this individual should receive this honor. Deadline for 2009 nominations is December 31, 2008.





Update on the eBay 1873-S No-Arrows half dollar

As reported in last month's issue, an eBay seller listed an 1873-S No-Arrows half dollar with an opening bid requirement of \$500,000. He mentioned he would have it at the ANA. I spoke with John Dannreuther (JD) about this and we attempted to study the coin but was told it was out with his photographer with no anticipated return date.

After the ANA, JD emailed me and said he was able to see the coin and ...

"Good to see you at the ANA.

I got to see Paul's "1873-S No Arrows" half dollar (don't know whether you got to see or not, as I did not see you after I saw it).

At first, I was intrigued, as it certainly has an "S" mintmark and there is no trace of arrows. However, I decided to check the date.....and.....it was an 1876!

Bill Fivaz was there while I was looking at it, and he checked it also and agreed.

Oh well, maybe someday!

Best,

JD"

So ends this! The Editor.

Question on an 1853 WA Half Dime



Jim Bowling sent in question and the answer is worth sharing with everyone. "I have an 1853 Liberty Seated Half Dime WA that I thought was a Valentine 4a but upon closer looking the die crack does not go through the three but from the rim through the right arrowhead and disappears into Liberty's foot. I may have asked the wrong

person and if so I apologize, but I would like to properly attribute this coin and D.W.Valentine's book is the only one I have. Books are becoming hard to come by and extremely expensive. If you could help or know who could I would appreciate it. I have attached a

photo, I hope you do not mind." I, the Editor, I forwarded this question to half dime expert **Steve Crain** and he replied:

"The ubiquitous 1853 With Arrows half dime has caused more than a few collectors and students of the series to throw up their hands in despair when trying to attribute an individual example. However, it is the available literature, and not the collector, who is to blame for this inability to attribute the coins in our collections. Essentially, we have just two references with which to refer when attempting to attribute Liberty Seated half dimes; "The United States Half Dimes", Dr. Daniel W. Valentine; 1931, American Numismatic Society, New York; and "The Complete Guide to Liberty Seated Half Dimes", Al Blythe; 1992, DLRC Press, Virginia Beach, VA. The former attempts to list every die marriage known to the author at the time he published, but is plagued with vagueness and ambiguity in the verbal descriptions, the photographic plates

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are too small, and the author often confused die states with die marriages. The latter presents significantly better photographic plates, but generally only one for each date rather than one for each die marriage. It is, by the author's own admission, not a comprehensive encyclopedia of all known die marriages for the series, but rather a general overview of the series. To date, there is no one comprehensive source for collectors to use to identify the Liberty Seated half dimes in their collections.

During the tenure of the Liberty Seated design, the Mint perfected and introduced the hubbing process, whereby all of the elements of the obverse and reverse dies were part of the hub, with the exception of the date for the obverse, and the mint mark on the reverse for the branch mint coins. This meant that, except for minor differences in placement of the date numerals and mint marks, all production dies were essentially identical. This may have delighted Mint production personnel, but is the bane of modern day 'variety' collectors, whose entire hobby revolves around the very distinction between those dies.

For the 1853 With Arrows half dime, the mintage was over 13 million pieces, the highest mintage for any half dime of any year, and double that of the next closest mintage. As a result, over 150 years later, they are everywhere to be found, and virtually ignored by most collectors. Even numismatists and researchers give them only casual attention. Walter Breen gives just one number () for all 1853 W/A half dimes. Valentine listed eleven (11) die marriages for the 1853 W/A date, but most of these seem to share the V4 dies, or dies which are "similar to No. 4", or "almost identical to No. 4", or some other ambiguous description. All of these are plated in the Valentine reference, but the presumed differences are difficult to detect.

Mint records for the 1853 With Arrows half dime indicate that the die shop prepared 78 obverse dies and 80 reverse dies, making it at least mathematically possible (if highly unlikely) that every obverse die could have been paired with every reverse die, giving us over 6000 possible die marriages! For those of us who have studied the series in depth, this figure seems almost plausible. No wonder researchers and numismatists have col-

lectively avoided in-depth studies of this date.

If we look at the photograph of Mr. Bowling's half dime, and compare it with the verbal descriptions from the Valentine reference, we are immediately and logically drawn to the V4a description of the obverse, which states: "Die of No. 4, but die crack runs from 3 through arrow to base". However, Mr. Bowling's coin does not appear to match this description, as the die crack runs from the rim, through the right arrow, but completely missing the 3, and into the base.

If we compare Mr. Bowling's image with the Valentine photographic plates (I use photographic enlargements made from an original 1931 Valentine NNM #48), we can see that the die crack does not appear to match (Unfortunately, Dr. Valentine's 1853 W/A V4 must have been one of his least attractive coins, as there is a considerable amount of 'schmutz' around the devices, making positive identification difficult). On the Bowling coin, the die crack runs slightly more vertically from the rim to the right arrow, and does not come close to the 3. But on the Valentine V4 plate coin, the die crack runs more horizontally toward the 3, just missing it. Therefore, I cannot call it a match.

When I compared Mr. Bowling's coin with several examples from my reference collection, I found three different obverse dies with die cracks running near the 3 in the date. One, as yet unnumbered die marriage, exhibits a retained cud from the rim @K4:30 to K5:30, across the toe, right arrow, and lower right loop of 3 in date, but again this does not seem to match the Bowling image. The others involve die cracks connecting with the 3 in the date.

I am afraid that Mr. Bowling's coin is one of those all-too-frequently seen examples which cannot be directly attributed to any of the presently known and published die marriages in the series. It may be a later die state of a known die marriage, or may be a completely new die marriage. That could only be determined (presumably) if complete obverse and reverse images were supplied, but even with this additional information, we are likely to be frustrated by the sheer numbers of potential die marriages for the date, only a fraction of which are known. Thus, it is likely that there will forever be many unknown, unpublished, and unlisted die marriages for the 1853 With Arrows half dime."



Subscriber Correspondence

From **Michele Ahwash (Kam's daughter)**: Bill, Thanks so much for sending this (*the August issue of the E-Gobrecht. Editor*) along to me. I really enjoyed attending the meeting. Hope to come again sometime. Best, Michele

From **Gerry Fortin**: What a great issue! Many thanks to you for the ongoing *E-Gobrecht* effort and the recent awards. I believe that the LSCC presents itself as a role model for the numismatic community through the efforts of yourself, John and Len. The multiple awards are a testimony to the dedication of the LSCC officers to seated coinage research and promotion.

From **Jim Gray**: Anyone who claims to have a unique 1873-S half dollar and doesn't remember where he got it is perpetrating a fraud. It was hard to determine that it was a coin much less one worth \$500,000.

From **Len Augsburger**: For the next *E-Gobrecht*...I thought you'd like to see the new Robert Ball Hughes website at <http://robertballhughes.googlepages.com/home>. Thank you for the assistance you gave me with articles on Ball Hughes and the Seated Liberty that I used at <http://robertballhughes.googlepages.com/1840quarterdollar>. I'm still looking for more reference information about Ball Hughes if you know of any that I missed. Thanks and enjoy! David E. Brown

Wanted: Good stories or recollections On John McCloskey

From **Len Augsburger**: We will be running a biography of John McCloskey in a future edition of the *Gobrecht Journal*. I am collecting related stories or recollections of the membership, please email any input to leonard_augsburger@hotmail.com.





Information Wanted

I'm currently working on the large task of cataloging the known seated half dime errors known to collectors by date/mintmark. If you own any seated half dime errors, please send me an e-mail at the address below and provide the following information to make this survey as accurate as possible:

- Date and Mintmark of coin
- Type of error
- Grade
- Certification service if graded
- Photographs of both sides of the coin (if possible)

Information about any known errors including blank planchets is welcomed. The results will be published in an article at the end of this year. Dennis Hengeveld, qeagle88@gmail.com

Notice: Availability of past issues of the E-Gobrecht

Through the generosity of Gerry Fortin, the previous issues of the *E-Gobrecht* are readily accessible on his seated dime website at <http://www.seateddimevarieties.com/LSCC.htm>

Advertisements

Rare Coins for Sale: Since 1979, David Lawrence Rare Coins has specialized in Seated and Barber coinage for collectors. Please visit our web site for 6,000+ offerings of U.S. & World coins, currency, and stamps for sale and auction. We are also interested in buying or selling your coins at auction. <http://www.davidlawrence.com> or phone 1-800-776-0560, members: PNG, ANA (life), FUN, CSNS

Liberty Seated Quarter Cuds & Rotated Dies

Wanted: Other U.S. series of interest as well. Please reply directly to Paul Kluth @ pcmdmp@msn.com or to the e-mail address of the *E-Gobrecht* newsletter.

Rotated Reverse Seated Dimes Wanted: I am

looking for rotated reverse Liberty Seated dimes. Any interested parties can email Jason Feldman at jason@seated.org

Wanted to Buy: Nice, problem-free bust and seated material. We specialize in affordable collector coins. Puro's Coins and Jewelry, web: www.vtcoins.com, email: puro@vtcoins.com, phone: 1-800-655-1327.

Seated Dime Die Varieties Wanted: I am paying high prices for Seated Dimes with major cuds, die cracks, and rotated reverses. Contact David Thomas at davethomas333@hotmail.com or 1-949-929-2830.



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LSCC Pledge

To encourage, promote, and dispense numismatic knowledge of the Liberty Seated coins; to cultivate fraternal relations among its members and all those interested in the science of numismatics.

LSCC Membership Information. Dues are \$20 per year and include three issues of the *Gobrecht Journal*, an award winning numismatic publication. To join the Liberty Seated Collectors Club, for *Gobrecht Journal* mailing address changes, or for other membership questions, correspond with the LSCC Secretary.

Articles, comments, or advertisements for publication in the *Gobrecht Journal* may be addressed to the LSCC President.

Information, input, comments, or suggestions for improvements to this *E-Gobrecht* are actively solicited from anyone and may be sent to the Editor, *E-Gobrecht*.

To be added or removed from the *E-Gobrecht mailing list*, send an email message with the words "Subscribe/Unsubscribe" in the subject line of the message to: wb8cpy@arrl.net.

Wanted: Material for this newsletter!

Please consider submitting something for print. It need not be elaborate; it can be something as simple as a short note on your favorite variety, neat find, nice cherry pick, happenings at a coin show, rare Liberty Seated coinage coming up for auction, etc. If you are interested in it, rest assured, others will be too! Sharing information is a goal of this newsletter and you need not be an experienced or famous writer to submit something. This is a continuing plea.

*The *E-Gobrecht* is not copyrighted; use its content freely but please be sure to quote the *E-Gobrecht* and the Liberty Seated Collectors Club.*

Mark your calendar !

2008

- 35th Anniversary of the LSCC - 2008
- LSCC voting of the 2008 Ahwash award - September 2008
- LSCC voting for the best article in issues #76 to #100 - September 2008
- LSCC Regional meeting - November 21, 2008, Friday, 9 AM, Baltimore Convention Center, room TBA but probably room 301.

2009

- LSCC voting for the James B. Pryor Award - September 2009
- LSCC Trade Dollar census - 2009